

Spokane Transit Authority  
1230 West Boone Avenue  
Spokane, Washington 99201-2686  
(509) 325-6000

Approved 10/20/22 - di

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Draft Minutes of the September 15, 2022, STA Board Workshop  
1230 W Boone Ave., Spokane, Washington  
*with a WebEx Video Conference Option*

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Chris Grover, Small Cities Representative (Airway Heights) *Chair*  
Al French, Spokane County  
Betsy Wilkerson, City of Spokane  
Josh Kerns, Spokane County  
Karen Stratton, City of Spokane  
Lori Kinnear, City of Spokane, *Chair Pro Tempore*  
Pamela Haley, City of Spokane Valley  
Zack Zappone, City of Spokane  
Tim Hattenburg, City of Spokane Valley  
Dan Sander, Small Cities Representative (Millwood)  
*Ex Officio*  
Rhonda Bowers, Labor Representative, *Non-Voting*

### **MEMBERS ABSENT**

Veronica Messing, Small Cities Representative  
(Cheney) *Ex Officio*  
Don Kennedy, Small Cities Representative (Medical Lake) *Ex Officio*  
Dan Dunne, Small Cities Representative (Liberty Lake),  
*Ex Officio*

### **STAFF PRESENT**

E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer  
Brandon Rapez-Betty, Chief Operations Officer  
Carly Cortright, Chief Communications & Customer Service Officer  
Karl Otterstrom, Chief Planning & Development Officer  
Monique Liard, Chief Financial Officer  
Nancy Williams, Chief Human Resources Officer  
Dana Infalt, Clerk of the Authority

### **PROVIDING LEGAL COUNSEL**

Megan Clark, Etter, McMahon, Lamberson, Van Wert & Oreskovich, P.C.

### **GUESTS**

Kevin Desmond, Principal & National Director, Transit and Rail, Sam Schwartz  
Tim Payne, Senior Principal, Nelson Nygaard

---

#### 1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chair Grover called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m. and introductions were made.

#### 2. **STA STRATEGIC PLAN WORKSHOP**

- A. **Welcome and Introductions:** Ms. Meyer welcomed everyone and expressed her appreciation for their participation in this third workshop. Ms. Meyer reviewed the agenda and the topics to be discussed and introduced consultants Mr. Tim Payne and Mr. Kevin Desmond. Ms. Meyer advised that the Mentimeter tool will be utilized again and invited all Board members to provide input. She offered kudos to the internal team for their hard work on the Strategic Plan content. Phase 1 will include a public hearing in November and conclude at the end of December.
- B. **Workshop Objectives:** Ms. Meyer introduced the three workshop objectives and turned the presentation over to Ms. Liard, who began by sharing a graphic of the Strategic Plan Outreach efforts to date. Those efforts included Discovery, Research & Validation; Scenario Planning; Strategic Plan Development. She noted we are currently in the "Recommendations for

Implementation” stage of the efforts. She reported on the Online Survey that closed August 29<sup>th</sup> and reviewed the feedback received on the survey results. She noted the rankings of ways to improve bus service. During Ms. Liard’s review of the Online Survey Results, Mr. Kerns asked if the results were geographically impacted, clarifying that people who live in an area with frequent bus service wouldn’t necessarily see that as an important factor. Ms. Weinand advised they did not correlate that to the answers. Mr. Zappone asked if they could receive demographics of the participants.

Responses to the survey questions were reviewed. Ms. Liard reviewed the community event booth activity at Cycle Celebration July 31, Unity in the Community August 20, and at the upcoming Valleyfest September 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. She shared the responses to a Rider Session on August 18<sup>th</sup>. There were also three listening sessions at community-based organizations which included 39 participants across three sessions. The Citizen Advisory Committee participated in an additional virtual meeting.

Primary themes from STA outreach centered around frequency, geography, more weekend bus service, expanded hours which denotes a strong alignment with draft strategic goals and strategies.

Board members then participated in a Mentimeter activity that asked: *What finding from outreach resonates the most with you?* More routes and frequency were the most popular answer. Discussion ensued.

- C. Vision Refresh: Ms. Liard reviewed the current Vision Statement “We aspire to be a source of pride for the region” and offered Proposed Vision statement alternatives:
1. Empowering people to unleash their potential through connections to opportunities
  2. Empowering people through the freedom to travel
  3. Connecting people to opportunities through the power of public transportation.

Utilizing the Mentimeter tool, Ms. Liard asked Board members to rank the current vision statement and the three options above.

Mr. French offered historical context on the current Vision Statement. Discussion ensued about potential for changes, wordsmithing, and the options for implementing. Ms. Wilkerson added that if we’ve achieved being a source of pride for the region, how do we sustain that level. Ms. Stratton offered suggestions, along with mentioning how employees are treated and satisfied. Ms. Bowers offered her recollection of the restructuring that Mr. French mentioned. Mr. Zappone said the previous vision worked in the past, but the future isn’t connected to that statement anymore. Discussion ensued. Ms. Kinnear expressed her desire to mention the future. Mr. Kerns noted that the bottom two options fit the Mission Statement. He noted a Vision statement is a declaration of a company’s goals for the future. A Mission Statement is a statement or declaration of a company’s purpose and core values. He thought #2 and #3 fit better as a Mission Statement. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Liard suggested that #2 and #3 be reworked by staff to reflect the suggestions. Ms. Bowers suggested a phrase and Ms. Liard asked her to send that to us, noting she is trying to balance with Ms. Kinnear’s suggestions. Ms. Wilkerson said as a transportation company she was challenged how we would “unleash people’s potential” because potential is more than just getting from point A to B. Mr. Kerns agreed. Mr. French noted that Mr. Kern’s definition reminded him that when thinking of Mission, Vision, and Value, you’re looking at what, why, and how. Perhaps asking those questions would help us further define. He agreed with Mr.

Zappone that it is about the future. Mr. Zappone noted “opportunities” resonated more than “travel” to him, but that he liked “empowering”.

Ms. Liard thanked everyone for their great discussion and feedback. She noted staff will work with the input provided and come back with an alternative.

- D. Draft Strategic Plan Goals, Strategies, and Performance Measures: Ms. Liard introduced Mr. Desmond who noted where we left off last time: “What are Goals, Strategies, and Performance Measures?” He reminded everyone that three goals were developed to guide the strategic direction of STA. Each goal is supported by strategies and performance measures. Strategies are high level approaches used to achieve goals, and performance measures are used to measure how well goals are being met. He said that Phase II will begin the second half of 2023, and specific projects will be identified that align with each strategy and goal.

He recapped the three Goals that received concurrence at the September workshop:

1. Elevate the customer experience
2. Lead and collaborate with community partners to enhance the quality of life in our region
3. Strengthen STA’s capacity to anticipate and respond to the demands of the region

*Goal 1 – Strategy 1.1 Expand and adapt mobility options to attract and serve more people.* Possible actions included further expand hours of service, introduce service in new areas of ridership, provide more frequent service across more routes, and develop on-demand service for areas and times of day not well served by fixed-route service.

*Goal 1 - Strategy 1.2 – Advance frequent, easy-to-use, fast, and reliable service.* Possible actions included expand high performance transit network, increase service frequency on existing corridors, particularly evenings and weekends, identify and address bottlenecks that slow service or cause unreliable travel times, collaborate with local and state governments to implement solutions like transit lanes and transit signal priority, promote high frequency service through education, wayfinding, amenities, and vehicles.

*Goal 1 - Strategy 1.3 – Deliver an outstanding door-to-door experience.* Possible actions included provide a seamless trip-planning, payment, and wayfinding experience designed for customers’ ease of use, improve first/last mile connections, enhance boarding locations through customer amenities such as shelters, real-time signage, and lighting, communicate in real time, embrace the use of technology, taking advantage of new transit industry advances.

*Goal 1 - Strategy 1.4 – Create a welcoming, comfortable, and physically secure environment for all customers.* Possible actions included develop and maintain relationships with diverse community groups to help identify and address unique needs, ensure fares are affordable, create proactive marketing tools for safe and comfortable use of transit through ongoing community engagement, promote ridership through education and outstanding service, invest in amenities which promote comfort and safety through our vehicles and facilities.

Ms. Kinnear noted a missing piece - specifically the Plaza. She felt we needed to call it out and look at it as a center point. Mr. Desmond clarified that she meant making that as a specific location. She concurred.

Mr. Desmond proceeded with Goal 1: Headline Performance Measure of Percentage of Residents with 15-minute or better all-weekday frequency. He noted further metrics to consider included annual boardings by 2035, unlinked annual trips per capita, percentage of area population that has ridden STA in the last 30 days, percentage of jobs with 15-minute or

better all-weekday frequency, customer satisfaction ratings, and percentage of boardings at sheltered stops.

Mentimeter activity followed his presentation of Goal 1. Ranking of how well these strategies will help STA meet its strategic goals (keeping in mind Ms. Kinnear's mention of the Plaza). Strategy rankings of 9 voting members resulted in the following:

- 1.1 Expand and adapt mobility options to attract and serve more people – 7.1
- 1.2 Advance frequent, easy to use, fast, and reliable service – 8.9
- 1.3 Deliver an outstanding door-to-door experience– 7.3
- 1.4 Create a welcoming, comfortable, and physically secure environment for all customers – 9.4

Mr. Desmond discussed the Mentimeter results and asked for feedback. Discussion ensued and members were then asked, "is anything missing from the list of strategies and actions?"

Goal 1 question asked, "How well do you think the headline performance measure "% of residents with 15-minute or better all-weekday frequency" aligns with STA'S goals?" Very Well received 3, Well received 4, and Neutral received 1.

Ms. Desmond moved on to Goal #2 - Lead and collaborate with community partners to enhance the quality of life in our region

*Goal 2 – Strategy 2.1 Expand Collaborate to enhance access to transit.* Possible actions included plan and advocate with partners for coordinated land use and transportation, leverage real estate assets to create opportunities for mixed use development, invest in coordinated projects that promote advancement of transit use, coordinate with rural, tribal, and intercity transit providers to extend transit's regional reach, leverage partner relationships to promote ridership and provide access to more people, collaboratively preserve long-term options for rail.

*Goal 2 – Strategy 2.2 Support community partners to amplify community benefits.* Possible actions included improve the visibility of transit as a potential solution to community challenges, participate in regional and local community planning initiatives, regularly communicate and collaborate with stakeholders, actively support community activities.

*Goal 2 – Strategy 2.3 Partner with the region's jurisdictions to promote and help residential development, employers, and service providers to locate near high-frequency transit.* Possible actions included partner on transit-oriented development (TOD) projects, support and advocate for transit-oriented infrastructure development, encourage jurisdictional incentives for TOD, share best practices for TOD.

Members were asked "How well will each of these strategies help STA meet its strategic goals?" and the results via Mentimeter were:

- 2.1 Collaborate to enhance access to transit – 9.4
- 2.2 Support community partners to amplify community benefits– 8.8
- 2.3 Partner with the region's jurisdictions to promote and help residential development, employers, and service providers to locate near high frequency transit– 9.4

Ms. Wilkerson commented on strategy 2.2, saying we could do better communicating what we are doing. Mr. French commented on electric vehicles and folks that might not be able to afford that going forward are going to rely on transit as their only form of transportation. Discussion ensued. Ms. Kinnear commented on people who don't own cars currently and opined on whether or not the next generation will own cars. Discussion ensued.

The question of “Is anything missing from this goal?” was met with no comments.

Mr. Desmond proceeded with Goal 2 Headline Performance Measure of number of new residential units by frequent transit. He noted further metrics to consider included percentage of residents with 15-minute or better all-day frequency, participation on local organization boards and in events/activities.

Goal 2 question asked, “How well do you think the headline performance measure “Number of new residential units by frequent transit” aligns with STA’S goals?” Very Well received 3, Well received 5, and Not Well received 1.

When asked why “not well”, Mr. Zappone said he agreed with land use and the importance in the region. He didn’t feel it was something we could measure for STA. It doesn’t match. He asked are we designing our routes or are we building new housing? He liked number of rides and facilitate partnership. What is STA doing to facilitate. Mr. French commented that STA is not a driver of housing. STA provides a service and doesn’t provide service to an area with no residential housing and then expect someone to come build. Ms. Kinnear commented that we previously said we would collaborate and be a partner in driving it. Discussion ensued. Mr. Desmond agreed that if you are agreeing to collaborating, it is a slivered outcome of the effectiveness of those collaborations. It can reflect the affect STA is having on the outcome. He said we will ruminate on this a bit because the points made are good.

Mr. Desmond presented Goal 3 – Strengthen STA’s capacity to anticipate and respond to the demands of the region.

*Goal 3 – Strategy 3.1 Develop, prepare, and empower our team members.* Possible actions included foster an inclusive and diverse culture where all employees feel welcome, appreciated, safe and comfortable, prioritize learning and development, adapt practices and policies to stay competitive in the evolving employment market, develop succession planning program for team members to grow and progress, build a mindset of continuous improvement and accountability throughout our organization.

*Goal 3 – Strategy 3.2 Engage in proactive assessment and planning, and deliver strategic long-term investments most beneficial to our communities.* Possible actions included leverage analytics to make informed choices, develop robust facilities master planning, acquire and expand passenger facility properties, and continue transition to zero-emissions vehicles.

*Goal 3 – Strategy 3.3 Exemplify financial stewardship to maintain public trust and organizational sustainability.* Possible actions included maintain “no-debt” financial position, excel at project management to deliver capital investments on time and on budget, emphasize transparency and accountability via consistent and robust reporting practices, and continue strong public outreach campaign across our various endeavors.

Mr. Desmond mentioned Goal 3 has two Headline Performance Measures: 1) Consistently be rated as one of the best places to work in our region and 2) Fully funded annual budget and 6-year capital improvement plan. He noted further metrics to consider included percentage of employees receiving annual training, percentage annual turnover rate, succession plans defined across the organization, percentage of fleet miles driven by zero-emission vehicles, and rating on “provides taxpayers a good value for the money’ in community perception survey.

The question of “How Well will each of these strategies help STA meet its strategic goals?” received the following ranking from Board members on Mentimeter:

- 3.1 Develop, prepare, and empower our team members– 9.4
- 3.2 Engage in proactive assessment and planning, and deliver strategic long-term investments most beneficial to our communities– 9.2
- 3.3 Exemplify financial stewardship to maintain public trust and organizational sustainability – 9.8

The follow up question of “Is anything missing from this list of strategies and actions” was met with no additions to the list.

How well does the headline performance measure “Consistently be rated as one of the best places to work in our region” align with STA’s goals? Very well received 6, Well received 4. Ms. Kinnear asked what the timeline associated with the performance measure would be? Ms. Meyer clarified that for the 2025-2035 plan, staff will report on the measures the Board identifies as goals. She said we have measurable objectives in Phase 1 and Phase 2 Plans. She noted staff needs the Board to help fill in the percentages and staff will bring those back for direction and review. Mr. Desmond noted that there are differentials for each of the measures. Housing is generally updated annually. If the community perception survey were completed every two years, that would be reported every other year.

Ms. Meyer thanked everyone for their participation and feedback. She reviewed the next steps of Finalize list of strategies, test strategies against future scenarios, establish targets for performance measures, draft the Phase 1 plan, continue outreach efforts, and hold public comment period and hearing.

She thanked Kevin and Tim for their expertise, Monique for leading the project, the executive team of Brandon, Karl, Nancy and Carly for their input, Kathleen Weinand, Dana, and Amie, and all the other staff who have participated in working to bring this plan forward.

3. ADJOURNED

With no further business to come before the Board, Chair Grover adjourned the meeting at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dana Infalt  
Clerk of the Authority

Steering Committee Members

E. Susan Meyer, Chief Executive Officer  
Monique Liard, Chief Financial Officer  
Karl Otterstrom, Chief Planning & Development Officer  
Brandon Rapez-Betty, Chief Operations Officer  
Nancy L. Williams, Chief Human Resources Officer  
Kathleen Weinand, Strategic Plan Project Manager  
Dana Infalt, Clerk of the Authority  
Amie Blain, Executive Assistant to the CFO

Consultant Team Workshop Staff

Tim Payne, Senior Principal, Nelson | Nygaard  
Kevin Desmond, Principal and National Director,  
Transit and Rail, Sam Schwartz